

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT

Public Law No: 111-22 (S. 896E) (Enacted: May 20, 2009)

DIVISION A

TITLE VII--PROTECTING TENANTS AT FORECLOSURE ACT

Amends in part: *United States Housing Act of 1937*, 42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(7)

Sunset: December 31, 2012

SEC. 701. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009”.

SEC. 702. EFFECT OF FORECLOSURE ON PREEXISTING TENANCY.

(a) In General- In the case of any foreclosure on a federally-related mortgage loan or on any dwelling or residential real property after the date of enactment of this title, any immediate successor in interest in such property pursuant to the foreclosure shall assume such interest subject to—

(1) the provision, by such successor in interest of a notice to vacate to any bona fide tenant at least 90 days before the effective date of such notice; and

(2) the rights of any bona fide tenant, as of the date of such notice of foreclosure—

(A) under any bona fide lease entered into before the notice of foreclosure to occupy the premises until the end of the remaining term of the lease, except that a successor in interest may terminate a lease effective on the date of sale of the unit to a purchaser who will occupy the unit as a primary residence, subject to the receipt by the tenant of the 90 day notice under paragraph (1); or

(B) without a lease or with a lease terminable at will under State law, subject to the receipt by the tenant of the 90 day notice under subsection (1) except that nothing under this section shall affect the requirements for termination of any Federal- or State-subsidized tenancy or of any State or local law that provides longer time periods or other additional protections for tenants.

(b) Bona Fide Lease or Tenancy- For purposes of this section, a lease or tenancy shall be considered bona fide only if—

(1) the mortgagor or the child, spouse, or parent of the mortgagor under the contract is not the tenant;

(2) the lease or tenancy was the result of an arms-length transaction; and

(3) the lease or tenancy requires the receipt of rent that is not substantially less than fair market rent for the property or the unit's rent is reduced or subsidized due to a Federal, State, or local subsidy.

(c) Definition- For purposes of this section, the term ‘federally-related mortgage loan’ has the same meaning as in section 3 of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2602).

SEC. 703. EFFECT OF FORECLOSURE ON SECTION 8 TENANCIES.

Section 8(o)(7) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(7)) is amended—

(1) by inserting before the semicolon in subparagraph (C) the following: and in the case of an owner who is an immediate successor in interest pursuant to foreclosure during the term of the lease vacating the property prior to sale shall not constitute other good cause, except that the owner may terminate the tenancy effective on the date of transfer of the unit to the owner if the owner—

(i) will occupy the unit as a primary residence; and

(ii) has provided the tenant a notice to vacate at least 90 days before the effective date of such notice.'; and

(2) by inserting at the end of subparagraph (F) the following: In the case of any foreclosure on any federally-related mortgage loan (as that term is defined in section 3 of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2602)) or on any residential real property in which a recipient of assistance under this subsection resides, the immediate successor in interest in such property pursuant to the foreclosure shall assume such interest subject to the lease between the prior owner and the tenant and to the housing assistance payments contract between the prior owner and the public housing agency for the occupied unit, except that this provision and the provisions related to foreclosure in subparagraph (C) shall not affect any State or local law that provides longer time periods or other additional protections for tenants.

SEC. 704. SUNSET.

This title, and any amendments made by this title are repealed, and the requirements under this title shall terminate, on December 31, 2012.

UNITED STATES HOUSING ACT OF 1937 **42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(7) (relevant section)**

(7) Leases and tenancy

Each housing assistance payment contract entered into by the public housing agency and the owner of a dwelling unit—

(A) shall provide that the lease between the tenant and the owner shall be for a term of not less than 1 year, except that the public housing agency may approve a shorter term for an initial lease between the tenant and the dwelling unit owner if the public housing agency determines that such shorter term would improve housing opportunities for the tenant and if such shorter term is considered to be a prevailing local market practice;

(B) shall provide that the dwelling unit owner shall offer leases to tenants assisted under this subsection that—

(i) are in a standard form used in the locality by the dwelling unit owner; and

(ii) contain terms and conditions that—

(I) are consistent with State and local law; and

(II) apply generally to tenants in the property who are not assisted under this section;

(C) shall provide that during the term of the lease, the owner shall not terminate the tenancy except for serious or repeated violation of the terms and conditions of the lease, for violation of applicable Federal, State, or local law, or for other good cause, and that an incident or incidents of actual or threatened domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking shall not be construed as a serious or repeated violation of the lease by the victim or threatened victim of that violence and shall not be good cause for terminating the tenancy or occupancy rights of the victim of such violence;

(D) shall provide that during the term of the lease, any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants, any criminal activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of their residences by persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises, or any violent or drug-related criminal activity on or near such premises, engaged in by a tenant of any unit, any member of the tenant's household, or any guest or other person under the tenant's control, shall be cause for termination of tenancy; except that

(i) criminal activity directly relating to domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, engaged in by a member of a tenant's household or any guest or other person under the tenant's control shall not be cause for termination of the tenancy or occupancy rights, if the tenant or immediate member of the tenant's family is a victim of that domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking;

(ii) Limitation.—Notwithstanding clause (i) or any Federal, State, or local law to the contrary, a public housing agency may terminate assistance to, or an owner or manager may bifurcate a lease under this section, or remove a household member from a lease under this section, without regard to whether a household member is a signatory to a lease, in order to evict, remove, terminate occupancy rights, or terminate assistance to any individual who is a tenant or lawful occupant and who engages in criminal acts of physical violence against family members or others, without evicting, removing, terminating assistance to, or otherwise penalizing the victim of such violence who is also a tenant or lawful occupant. Such eviction, removal, termination of occupancy rights, or termination of assistance shall be effected in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Federal, State, and local law for the termination of leases or assistance under the relevant program of HUD-assisted housing.

(iii) nothing in clause (i) may be construed to limit the authority of a public housing agency, owner, or manager, when notified, to honor court orders addressing rights of access or control of the property, including civil protection orders issued to protect the victim and issued to address the distribution or possession of property among the household members in cases where a family breaks up;

(iv) nothing in clause (i) limits any otherwise available authority of an owner or manager to evict or the public housing agency to terminate assistance to a tenant for any violation of a lease not premised on the act or acts of violence in question against the tenant or a member of the tenant's household, provided that the owner, manager, or public housing agency does not subject an individual who is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking to a more demanding standard than other tenants in determining whether to evict or terminate;

(v) nothing in clause (i) may be construed to limit the authority of an owner or manager to evict, or the public housing agency to terminate assistance to any tenant if the owner, manager, or public housing agency can demonstrate an actual and imminent threat to other tenants or those employed at or providing service to the property if that tenant is not evicted or terminated from assistance; and

(vi) nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede any provision of any Federal, State, or local law that provides greater protection than this section for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.;

(E) shall provide that any termination of tenancy under this subsection shall be preceded by the provision of written notice by the owner to the tenant specifying the grounds for that action, and any relief shall be consistent with applicable State and local law; and

(F) may include any addenda required by the Secretary to set forth the provisions of this subsection.